Center for Modern Greek Studies

Greek American Oral History Project

Transcription

Tape:

Subject: Theodore Bogdanos

Third Party:

Interviewer: Jillian Eugenios

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I: Theodore Bogdanos. I'll spell it B-O-G-D-A-N-O-S. It's January 25th, 2005. We're at his home in San Leandro and Dr. Bogdanos perhaps you could introduce yourself and start wout with your country of birth and let us know other countries that you've lived in and we'll go from there.

A: I was born here in Canton, Ohio in 1932. I went to Greece when I was three years old during the Depression 1944, 34. Uhh we got stuck during the war, we would not come back to the United States and we came back in 1947 and we moved directly to California.

I: And did you settle for good this time in California?

A: Yes, yes. We liked to, my father liked California unlike Ohio which is inundated with snow.

I: You said the Depression and I imagine there was hard time in United States but then what was going on in Greece during the time you went home and did when you went back home were your parents thinking to settle for good at home in Greece?

A: Yes that was the <coughs> excuse me, that was the original intention uhh because my father had built up a property < mumbling> between Corinth and Patras and umm then the war broke out umm and our protperty was lost, we would not come back. So we had to umm go through the war when the war broke out in 1940 within Italy and Greece we went to a village {020} and we stayed there for, until we returned to the United States.

I: And you say went to a village does it mean escape danger from the home that your father had built?

A: Umm it was actually a legal situation, a legal case which could not be clarified because of uhh {024} war and the death of {024} officials.

I: Do you remember bombs, fear of, do you remember war situations as a child?

A: Yes. It It's a rather long story but uhh I think we lived uhh idyllic state until the war broke out in 1940 and I remember umm hearing the bombsi n Patras where the Italians were bombing and umm everybody running and being agitated and umm fearful and then we moved to the village and umm eventually my family split up. My father was the American, he was a target so to speak, the occupation forces. I went with a {033} who was a maker in the guerilla forces. {032} is his name <mumbling> so I spent about I'd say 2 almost 3 years with guerilla forces taking part in underground activity mostly as a messenger boy. I was too small to uhh uhh do any fighting. Umm then uhh I think uhh the war the hygienic conditions I got typhoid fever toward the end of the war. I recovered and uhh we came back with hardly anything really.

I: Being born in American then were you also an American citizen?

A: Yes.

I: And your father was ok to return to America?

A: Yes, he was naturalized, both he and my mother.

I: And your mother. And you say your father was a target but you found each other in the end.

A: Well, well we did not umm move too far away were the general area together, the northern part of Peloponessos. And uhh you know we would communicate, we would be with each other as often as possible.

I: Mmhmm. Let's go on to the next umm well just we would call them the second arrival to the United States because actually your parents had had their first arrival already. So now we're after war arrival maybe you could say well how if your health was umm, if you were ok after that and what business did your father go into and where did whereabouts in the U.S. and your growing up in the U.S.?

A: We came uhh we came to San Leandro directly. We had a, my father had a friend who uhh helped him get moving with a job. The umm obviously I was very exited getting to New York and watching from the ship. The cars and the high rise buildings was really exciting. I was immediately struck by the friendliness of uhh the American people having left Greece when everybody was in a sour mood and still being numb by the war. It was a welcome feeling to come here and to really uhh sense that this was indeed a great society. Umm we came here to San Leandro and I went to high school to finish high school.

I: Sorry and you saw New York City//

A: //Yes//

I: //but you did not actually enter Ellis Island.

A: No, no//

I: //Ok, where//

A: //I did not//

I: //so you port, port of New York.

A: No that was umm my parents went here but we went into New York and umm we met some relatives and uhh very friendly and giving people.

I: And you start to complete a passage now down to//

A: //San Leandro//

I: //San Leandro.

A: By train.

I: Oh. Know that California is a desirable place weather but did you have a contact here?

A: Uhh just a friend of my father's umm whom my father had helped back in the Canton, Ohio days that uhh gave my father a job so we could earn a living.

I: You remember his name as in the friend, is he Greek?

A: Yes. He was Greek, from Greece and he was a successful businessman. Umm John Zoutis.

I: Mmhmm. Now how old are you on this trip to from New York?

A: How old was I?

I: Yes.

A: About say, oh close to 15 years old.

I: Ok. Tell me about the train, train ride.

A: Well the train ride of course was full of wanderers because of the people we would meet and not knowing English trying to figure out what was being said. Again I was constantly struck by the friendliness, the people I think they were equally fascinated with me. Umm my being a foreigner of course to them. Umm and umm I must sayt hat landscape-wise it was not very interesting because bgoing through the uhh big, flat plains of Ohio, well not Ohio but Pennsylvania and then Utah it was wonderful to finally come to California and see a hill, mounted with a few trees. That umm encouraging and heartwarming.

I: Was that your mother, father and yourself. Any brother or sister?

A: Two brothers, an older one, a retired priest, who passed away recently and a younger one brother, who is umm married, he has a family and is retired.

I: And their names are//

A: //Father George Bogdanos the umm priest and John Bogdanos, my youngest brother. I'm the middle one.

I: So everyone's on the train together then?

A: Except for my oldest brother, he was kept behind uhh because they wanted to umm draft him because of draftable age so by the time we got him out it took a little time. He came umm he joined us I'd say about a couple years afterwards.

I: And the year that you set foot in New York and the year that your brother joined you do you know, 1944? Or?

A: No, we came in 1947 and I think he joined us in 1951 or.

I: Does it mean he could have been drafted into a Greek army //

A: //yes//

I: //after World War II?

A: Yes.

I: OK.

A: Because we of being of Greek parentage we are simultaneously American as well as Greek citizens.

I: I see. And would they have kept him for two years or?

A: I'm not sure how long but but they there was kind of a bureaucratic uhh process that you go through to get him out.

I: I see. Ok I'm going to pause a minute.

A: Oh they were quite happy when my brother came umm the question, the and he went soon after he went to the seminary in Boston.

I: Oh

A: To study the umm. I think, I think uhh our feelings, my feelings to say were mixed because on the one hand I was excited uhh about what was ahead of me. At the same time I felt quite lonely and out of place because umm the people my age here <mumbling> had not gone through the the difficult situations that I had and uhh perhaps I demanded too much maturity on their part. And actually they were lucky, they were innocent so uhh it was difficult to make friends immediately even among the Greek americans. I must say were a little patronizing ummt o us maybe because they identified us with their parents that came from the mountains, the villages. But umm eventually I became involved in, in the Greek community. I became involved in the church as a musician, as a a chanter, then I began to compose music umm for our choirs and to conduct choirs so umm one happy thing that happened is that umm umm I, I thought that I would have left all that as a child in Greece. That is, my work in the church but happily enough when I came here they needed uhh a cantor, I went to San Francisco Holy Trinity, I sang, chanted there. So I was able to to channel some of my, my love and my energy toward my background to channel it in a productive way within the church.

I: Who inspired your work as a cantor. I imagine you started in Greece by a priest over there?

A: Actually it was my brother, my oldest brother who always wanted to become a priest and umm asked me to go and chant with him. I didn't want to, I preferred to play soccer on the the fields until one day I killed a rooster, I was chased by the owner and I sought asylum in the church, remembering that the ancient Greeks when hunted they sought asylum in their temples. And when I pulled next to my brother panting he thrust the book in front of me with a diabolical smile saying now read. That was the beginning.

I: Hmm. Fear has some benefits doesn't it?

A: Yes and I'm fascinated by the strange ways that the Almighty has to bring us forth.

I: Tell me how you go to from San Leandro to San Francisco on Sundays.

A: Yeah then I would go by bus with my, my brother at the time. Then eventually I went to uhh UCLA, then I got drafted in the American army for two years. I came back in 1958, I went back to Holy Trinity as a choir director. I was there for 20 years where I would travel by car. Then umm 10 years of umm not conducting any longer but uhh uhh writing music, inscribing, translating and umm then I went into Oakland, the Ascension Cathedral and I became a choir director there for 15 years. Then after that I retired <mumbling> retired. Here I am again continuing my work composing, transcribing from Byzantine chant into Western notation so our choirs our people can read the music, translating so I could make that literature available to our people here but also to the academic world. I use a quite a bit of research in Byzantine literature and music umm grants that I take in research grants and came to Europe. So this all somewhat tangled I umm so I'm continuing and I do hope that umm there will be less acitivity to chant because I grew up with that activity as a child so it's very much engrained in me.

I: Tell me about your studies, which locations on those grants and tell me about UCLA.

A: Well I went to UCLA in 1956, excuse me 1954. Uhh I begun at Berkeley in 52 in the drama department, I went to UCLE for the remaining two years, I studied film, filmmaking. And I was {161} I went into the umm army for two years, that's where I met my wife in Germany. Uhh when I returned I went to work then I went back nurse with an incurable but not infectious illness, multiple sclerosis. But I was fortunate enough to umm with the help my wife of course to go back to school to get my master's at San Francisco State then go on for my Ph.D. at Berkeley where I <mumbling> San Jose State University almost 26 years. Now umm because of my connection with Byzantine literature and music I devoted quite a bit of time in my research toward that because it was a field that had not been handled by too many people because of the linguistic limitations. Not many people know medieval Greek for example. So umm I went to Europe at least twice on sabbatical leaves, worked the national libraries, Vienna, Paris, Athens, Rome, umm working mostly with Byzantine manuscripts. And uhh I wrote several articles on the topic and did some of my graduate teaching in seminars that deal with, that deal with the topic.

I: And the studies and the subjects in UCLA what were they going toward.

A: That was, that was drama, I was interested in theatre arts, yes.

I: Ok. That was a budding time in LA for filmmaking wasn't it?

A: Umm well umm yes but as I said eventually when I came out of the army and with our first child and uhh when I realized how much effort and time it would take to get into the field whereas having gone to Europe it was a theatre and opera house every city and here you had to go to New York or some kind of a mecca and uhh leave for a little job and having studied philosophy, literature and music I thought that I would be actually wasting my life to pursue work in the theatre. Umm and I I enjoyed family life, I and, and also again the mysterious ways of uhh God that's when I had my diagnosis of being

ill with multiple sclerosis and uhh I think that cast the die that I should play things conservatively. Although it was not too conservative because I decided to go on with my Ph.D. I was very fortunate to be able to finish that, to put in a full period of teaching and I'm thankful that I'm still fairly healthy except for some physical disability.

I: You went in the army and could you tell us about Germany and your position in the army?

A: Oh I, I, I was drafted and I was uhh as miscast as many of us were, college boys that uhh did not like the regimentation of army life. Uhh fortunately there was no war going on. Uhh the Korean conflict had ended so I managed to uhh to go to Germany and umm I really enjoyed uhh German culture uhh it was kind of beautiful antidote to my shall we say conditioning as a child to hate everything German because of the war. But then when I went to Germany I was once again exposed to the beauty of Germany, the solidity and idealism of the people so the wounds and the mountains about which Beethoven {215} and of course I had met my wife who had also grown as a baby during the war and I could see that these people had suffered just as much as we had in their own way. So all that shall we say initial hate and reservation was transformed into love which is a marvelous transformation.

I: Ohh did your wife accompany you back to the United States?

A: Yes, soon, soon after I was released, yes.

I: Why were you drafted when there's no war?

A: Well because the draft was on still at that time and everybody had to go that was in somebody in mind.

I Ohh I see.

A: That was a very natural thing at that time.

I: Oh we had a draft on…ok. What year was your son born?

A: Excuse me?

I: You had a son first?

A: No, my daughter.

I: Daughter, oh.

A: My oldest daughter. Uhh who unfortunately died of {226} breast cancer two years ago, she was 43 years old. She was a umm a {229} journalist in Berekely and the4n umm she worked for various magazines, became a freelance editor but then she went to Greece and umm she was so enchanted by the land but also by a young man whom she met and she stayed there. But eventually then she was diagnosed with uhh cancer, she managed to go on for 10 years after the diagnosis.

I: What city in Greece was she in and what was?

A: She was in Athens mostly she worked there, editor, foreign correspondent, she would write uhh articles for New York times, London Times.

I: Now before you retired did you visit Greece quite a bit?

A: Yes, well not quite a bit but several times. We tried to manage to go every 2 or 3 years. I I did go there on my sabbatical twice but then for pleasure several other times.

I: Is the home still there that you stayed in ?

A: My grandfather's home, yes. Well it has been cracked up by an earthquake they had several years ago and one of my cousins is fixing it up umm.

I: What's the city of that home?

A: That's in a village near {248} called Aliki which used to be an ancient city and they are discovering now all kinds of temples and umm so I'm hanging out to a piece of vineyard in case they discover a temple or a box of gold and Greek coins.

I: Yeah. Is the vineyard producing anything?

A: Not really. In fact, there are no, it's not a vineyard anymore it has olive trees.

I: Olive trees.

A: Are you warm enough?

I: Yep, we're going through some discussion about our heritage and I was feeling my heritage as a foreigner overseas as an expatriot and Dr. Bog-Bogdanos was going to tell us about the cultural umm involvement, how we get there.

A: Well I'm somewhat because I I grew up over there but the I've noticed that I begun saying to you that a certain kind of type of individual is emerging out of the Greek-American umm uhh society here. Uhh children which have derived from the parents certain basic nad important values uhh definitely an appreciate of the, of the divine and the mysterious in life umm the local family, the the sense of commitment to each other, to friends, family and umm they also uhh this indiviaul that I'm talking about, after finishing school and getting some money, this individual on his own, or her own, decided like my oldest daughter to go to Greece and rediscover on his own that background, become richer, stronger. They stay in the mainstream here, they become successful people uhh professionally and yet the same time the strength is that the discovery of the roots uhh and by that I mean not only is a kind of an academic question, where do we come from, but this discovery also shapes the thinking and I assume eventually the thinking of the whole country here is to the future. Watch how we value, watch how we aim at and uhh I think this mixture of the emerging Greek Americans I've described, although it's not always like that, I think it's a, it's a to me it's a a ideal, marvelous individual and I just see that in my children and I do hope that we, we can continue that. So people do not become either uhh so totally insulated, at being, you know, live in kind of a Greek ghetto, or become so assimilated that they become

formless. Umm with no, no, no strong sense of of spiritual, cultural identity. So umm I value that kind of individual, maybe because I've traveled uhh quite a bit and I've seen, met uhh various people and it's this mixture, cosmopolitanism and yet a strong sense of one's own center of gravity which makes the individual interesting.

I: You're right, the Greek. My parents and your parents were coming for a better life but we were born here, the ones that are born here so we didn't experience suffering and umm I don't know at one point during when we're talking about values how do we have values if we've already had everything? Well uhh just at one point do you remember being hungry during World War II? If you look at Americans you can see that's never happened here?

A: Right. I see that in my children and I don't resent that because of fine, I I'm not sure that suffering is necessary uhh refines uhh human character so fine, as long as, as long as they maintain their compassion for those that have less than they, less advantages. If they become insensitive and too uhh well fed, don't care about the suffering of others then I, that would be a great loss. Maybe then they should have gone through some kind of catastrophe to expand their perspective but umm sure that if I, if I had never went to Greece I probably would be, you know, very much like them and uhh I wouldn't feel any inferior for that.

I: Well tell me the exact nationality of your wife and the languages both of you speak?

A: My wife uhh whose main name is Herta, which I think means daughter of the earth, erde meaning earth. Umm I call her by her middle name uhh, Helen, uhh she has two other middle names, umm uhh my wife was born in Germany during the war, 1940. Her father fought various fronts, he was a nice, wonderful man, a carpenter by training. He had spent some time in the United States umm, and so Helen, my wife, went through starvation, bombings, and killings and uhh misery. Uhh I met her when I was a soldier uhh I <mumbling> soldier a little more prompted to seek company. Umm but nevertheless my wife I I I met that kind of mixture which I admired in the so called ideal woman, that she was a European by character and yet she knew perfect English when I met her, she had studied in high school. Umm so umm she struck me in a way as more, as closer to me uhh maybe because of her background in suffering is closer to my character than let's say the usual Greek American young lady who had not matured that fast. I don't mean that in a derogatory way but had not gone through as much. Helen umm knows French, she speaks Greek, uhh uhh mostly not, not very exact but the fundamental basic things. My mother of course has helped with that. Uhh because my mother finds it more difficult uhh to speak in English. Umm so she had a very cosmopolitan background, she was well read uhh. I myself I can, because of my profession, I can read umm most European languages, of course I can read the Classical ones, the Classical Greek and Latin. I can speak German. I manage alright in French and Italian and Spanish. So I can stay out of jail. And of course I Greek.

I: What was your first language?

A: Greek. When I came here I didn't know a, I only knew a few words that my father had taught me.

I: And your mother, where is she?

A: Excuse me?

I: Your mother.

A Yes.

I: She, she's//

A: She's still alive, she's 96 years old.

I: What's her name?

A: Tula.

I: Ok. What's say her, what was her maiden name?

A: {365}

I: Is she living?

A: Near us, here in an umm apartment.

I: Ok. She's healthy.

A: Umm not, not too healthy because umm you know, she's broke a hip and a shoulder so she has a couple of ladies that are living with her with fear almost every day.

I: What do you, what messages do you remember from your mother who let's say guidance before you left into the army, before you, what did she instill in you and your dad?

A: Umm I think both of my parents if I can umm many things of course but I think the key thing was this ability to sacrifice themselves for the family and for the children and this is something I feel almost obsessively toward my children and sometime that not too healthy, it can become tyrannical . Umm but I've seen my parents really sacrifice the lives practically to bring us up and I think that's that's a very powerful thing that I inherited and I think that my children are inheriting some of that as well.

I: Were you surrounded by relatives in San Leandro?

A: Yes, uncles. In San Leandro?

I: Well//

A: //or in Greece?

I: Well in California.

A: No, I had no relatives here no.

I: Ohh so what was the goings on on Sundays in your?

A: Well we, we went umm, we took the bus, went down to the Oakland Church and I went up to the cantor and I began chanting so I led a curiosity, a young kid chanting. And gradually we made friends.

I: And this is the Bush, Brush Street church or?

A: Right, correct.

I: Brush street.

A: Brush street yes.

I: Oakland. Ok. Well describe your feelings of identity as an American and describe your feeligns of identity in relation to Greece or Greek culture.

A: Well this is very difficult to do. Uhh I consider myself umm uhh you might say a citizen of the world because of my background and my uhh mixing with people that umm academically they grew up cosmopolitan uhh studying various languages, various literatures. However, I think in the deepest recesses of my heart and soul, I think I'm quite Greek, the things that I value, that things that I'm willing to die for, I think the American part is a more adult, a more rational part of me. Umm but ultimately I think of myself as a mixture, an added mixture. I think that umm things have fallen nicely together. My, my Greek background, umm my living and working and raising a family in this country. I'm not sure that I could go back and live in Greece. Uhh once you come here you, you want to visit, you don't want to stay there. There are certain things that rub you the wrong way.

I: {424} Uhh in again a semi foreigner or difficulty to do business or, or lifestyle?

A: Well uhh yes, I think that in a way the problem was with me, that I felt uhh self-conscious for my foreignness. And I made a big deal out of it, I think that mostly people have been very tolerant and accepting. But to me I wanted to put up my best front always so uhh I was overcareful perhaps uhh. I don't think my, my background was an impediment, I never thought of it as being such. Umm in fact I can think more open of my poorness as being a distinguishing mark than, rather than this, something that would make people feel prejudice toward me. That was also too certain amount of prejudice but then it was nothing that I can really remember.

I: Mmhmm.

A: I think uhh an anecdote, when I was looking for a job I applied at Capwell's the ladies' lingerie, a Southern lady told me that she couldn't hire me because of my accent. Well, when I came out I told the young ladies why I was not being hired, they were shocked because they felt that my accent would have made the sale of lingerie more appealing <laughing> So how could I convince the Texan uhh lady that uhh my accent could have been of some advantage.

I: Any reason you applied in lingerie?

A: I was looking desperately for a job, I was willing to do anything. <laughing>

I: <laughing> Capwell's in Oakland?

A: Yes.

I: Ok, where else did you go looking?

A: Excuse me?

I: Where else did you seek umm a job?

A: Ohh I'm uhh when I came umm out of the army as <mumbling> I looked everywhere it was very difficult with the recession at the time and I was often being told that I was overqualified because of my college education so umm I was caught between a vicious cycle. But we eventually managed.

I: So what was your first job after a recession or during recession?

A: Yes, I, I, I let me say that when I could not go to school because of financial reasons fundamentally I worked in factories.

I: Ok.

A: Canneries and various factories and well I umm, I got a job as a umm, a tool maker in umm Catepillar and then umm I had my diagnosis and by the advice of a friend of mine neurologist I was told that provided my wife went along with it I should try to aim to the highest which I did. And I was fortunate enough that I was able to fulfill that.

I: Where is Catepillar company, in Oakland?

A: Yes, San Leandro.

I: Were you trained in toolmaking?

A: Umm well the tools that I was making was very simple. If I kept {488} two or three dimensions I <mumbling> great thinking <laughing>

I: <laughing> How did you support yourself through all this college? I know in Greece, I have a feeling it's you don't have to support, they will, the government will pay but how did you parents uhh or did you have scholarships for these//

A: //initially I had a scholarship but then I was expelled because I did very badly.

I: Where.

A: And my father became ill. That was back in 1950, 51. Uhh when I go back to school uhh even though I had a family and uhh taking life more seriously umm well I worked part time as a choir director and uhh my wife worked full time while we had our three children. So umm if I may dare an

autobiographical statement is that without, this of course why I value my, my, my wife, that, that, self sacrifice was so immense, so great, ultimately things worked out very well but without her and the support I could not have done what I've done.

I: And what was she, where was she working?

A: Oh she worked in various car dealers as a secretary and also as an aide, which she's still doing in the school districts, school teacher's aide.

I: Tell me the names of your three children.

A: My three children?

I: Their names.

A: The older one, the old, the oldest one Tula, then uhh named after my mother and then the boy Hans, named after my father in law, and the third one Elizabeth, named after my mother in law.

I: Ok. Where are those two children?

A: Elizabeth is working as a Vice President uhh head of marketing of a company back in Ohio. Ironic that she decided to go back where I didn't want to go back. Uhh Hans is working for the post office here in San Leandro. Both are married, the daughter has two children, 9 and 4, in fact today is my grandson's fourth birthday, I have to call him. Umm Hans got married last June so no, he warned me not to rush him to get uhh another Theodore in the works, that is his father.

I: What religion, what is the religion of your affiliation with I'm assuming being Greek Orthodox.

A: Yes.

I: Ok you are Greek Orthodox?

A: Yes.

I: Umm we pretty much know, but here is the question: In what way has it played a part in your life?

END of SIDE 1

Counter: 000

I: Side one on the first tape is already done and so Dr. Bogdanos we were going to talk about the position of the Greek church in your spirituality.

A: Well the ummm uhh the church has been, let me make this <phone ringing> I think that <mumbling> the umm let me make this correction, when we talk about the Greek Orthodox church,

unfortunately the word Greek sounds so ethnic actually the proper word would be Hellenic, meaning Christianity with a strong Hellenic, Classical background because the thought of ancient Greece and Christianity are really the mixture that constitutes the so called Greek Orthodox church. Uhh surely there are ethnic elements in it but I think we're talking about the culture and the language of the uhh New Testament, of early Christianity. Umm it's distinguished from that of the West where a different kind of mentality and attitude toward the human being is umm being forward. Let me give you one example. To the Greeks, the ancient Greeks, uhh sin, amartia, means simply missing the mark. At no point is the human being derided or humiliated at being depraved and worthless and this is an inheritance from uhh ancient Greek culture, the worth of the individual and it becomes part of Hellenic Christianity, part of the Greek Orthodox theology. In the West, uhh I'm thinking of people like Saint Augustine uhh the individual is mostly depraved, lost, uhh worthless. So there's a very powerful sense of the sinfulness of the human being which you don't find as strongly in umm in Byzantine Christianity or Hellenic Christianity. So I'm making the distinction because people hear Greek Orthodox Church they think that it's something of the village of some provincial town. No, it means fundamentally the mixture of Hellenic, ancient Greek thought and Christianity, which distinguishes our part of {021} world. Now going to what role has it played, of course from a spiritual standpoint it has given me certain values. It has taught me how to umm to believe in something higher than I thus expanding my own vision which could otherwise be imprisoned in my own limited existence. The ability to worship, to enjoy the mystery of life because after all faith is for through with mystery just like a love affair you love somebody although you don't fully understand the person. Umm you <mumbling> for me it has brought something, two things together which have been very central in my thinking and my writing and my teaching, namely how the divine and the beautiful intersect, mind you our church is very ritualistic, the fine arts play a key part in it uhh art, music, poetry, architecture, all being umm intimating, suggesting the beauty of the art's artist, which is God, the architect being the universe. So the church is satisfied, in other words, both my spiritual quest as well as my appreciation of beauty and what, what a great, very challenging thing it is to try to capture the divine which is beyond images, words, to try to capture it in it's very opposite, words and images and the church has done that for me. Umm so umm this has been this topic of my, my, my writing, how great poets like Dante, for example, how is was able to portray the inexpressible in human terms when you know that it's not like that and yet it's the closest he can get.

I: Hmm.

A: Umm it is highly abstract but also the church is uhh espedcially in this country has offered also a a human so so context because you meet with individuals that uhh the their going through the same things, they have the same {046}, the same hopes so uhh part of that faith becomes also the presence of other people like you.

I: I have the titles of two uhh of of some books on this particular subject or any umm, any thing that you've published that you've written for your studies or?

A: Well one book that deals specifically with these published 1983 by Pennsylvania State Press uhh it's called {053} Image of the Ineffable: A Study in Medieval Poetic Symbolism. Umm where it talks specifically about the, the artists and poet's attempt to capture umm the inexpressible, in expressable

human terms. The both the epistemological as wella s the artistic challenge that that task offers. Then I published umm a book was a collection of uhh Byzantine chants uhh and I translate them in into English. It's called The Byzantine Liturgy: Acknowledging an Order. And I've done quite a bit of composing. I composed a liturgy during the services of the church.

I: Where can we find these two books, are they in the public libraries?

A: Umm well I'm I'm sure that the one Medieval Poetic Symbolism would be in the university libraries. I'm not sure that the local library would carry something like that.

I: Ok. Is there any immigrant in your history umm that dead, is deceased and you would have, would like us to know about someone in your recolle-lection of someone in your family that you would like to umm make sure and document while we are here together. The who is already deceased.

A: What, what, what, what is this person, a?

I: Another immigrant who who is deceased in your family that you can recall umm?

A: In my family?

I: Yes, that umm that a name or umm an important influence to you, let's say.

A: Well obviously my parents umm. Umm I, I can think of various umm clergyman that have come from Greece here that become highly educated uhh very again perfect example of maintaining their identity, control spiritual identity yet becoming part of the mainstream. But these are not within the family though and uhh somebody let's say like the retired uhh senator, state senator, Nick Petris, uhh is a good example of the kind of individual that I mentioned early, the Greek American emerging. Nick is a very learned man umm and yet he is a great stateman.

I: Yeah. You have memberships in civic organization called MLA, what is?

A: Yeah the Modern Language Association.

I: And are they out of San Francisco?

A: No, they are national.

I: Are you active with them now?

A: Not as much though.

I: And what, what do they, what do they do for I guess acknowledge language?

A: Yeah they uhh hold conferences, conferences, people come and read papers and also people come to look for a job.

I: Ok. Umm the last university that you taught at was where?

A: Oh I umm I'm teaching part time once in three semesters a seminar at the umm the Athenagoras Institute in Berkeley. That's part of the umm Theological umm specific Theological Seminar, a course in Byzantine Music and Literature. Uhh but that's that's part time but full time job the last one I had was at San Jose State.

I: Ok. I guess we we can close in our interview for today. A very elegant man, I'm in his home in San Leandro once again and if you have anything else uhh we can//

A: //well//

I: //look for your, for your interview, for your, for your life.

A: Well I, all I can say is that umm I do hope that uhh those that follow us will not uhh try so desperately to assimilate themselves and practically become so to speak regular. Umm that they will go back and learn to appreciate their heritage, spiritual, artistic, cultural because that makes them even greater American citizens. There is nothing more bland and useless than an American who doesn't have any sense of roots or upbringing. Uhh it could be {106} maybe it is so some unhappiness of many, of our people here. Umm I'm specifically talking about Greek American intellectuals who think, somehow in the academic, adolescent, late adolescent rebellion from their parents who were sometimes backward and tyrranical. They want to shake off uhh any connection uhh with their Greek heritage. An example, for example, the the the Greek language of the uhh of the umm of the worship uhh thinking that by using Byzantine chantwith the medium of Hemingway, somehow that it will bring out some kind of spiritual renewal. So they think that by taking these umm quick ways that they will save umm the children whereas they should uhh try to reconcile those beautiful things of our heritage within each of the future as all. It is a tricky, difficult situation. Umm I have no idea a solution but to me especially as a musician of the church it bothers me that whereas uhh the petitions, the prayers should be done in the language of the country, English, in our case, that the hymns where language and music have shaped each other, they cannot exist separately, that they would maintain that. I've seen that in {122} church in Europe, for example. Where it has petitions done in the language of the land but the hymns, the great music of the songs kept as they were, as masterpieces. They understand that translations but some of our intellectuals and clergyman think that by making for example the church uhh sound like the first congregational church down the street that somehow that they will find salvation in that and I don't think so. Umm so I I I do plead with the future as much as I can, not let go of this monument of civilization which are ours, we must keep as curators as we, so that's that's my wish.

I: Thank you very much, turning it off, goodbye.

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